F 73
.64
.C72 C7

A MEMORIAL TO PATRICK A. COLLINS

Patrick A. Collins

A MEMORIAL

TO

PATRICK A. COLLINS

HISTORY OF ITS INCEPTION, ESTABLISHMENT AND DEDICATION

This little volume is published by the Collins Memorial Committee

---

BOSTON
GEO. H. ELLIS CO., 272 CONGRESS STREET
1909

The Memorial.

The popular impulse to perpetuate the name and the public record of Mayor Patrick A. Collins by some form of memorial grew strong and pressing soon after his death in September, 1905. Just a week after his interment in Holyhood Cemetery, a meeting of representative men of Boston was held, at 53 State Street, to consider ways and means to meet the demand of the people for recognition of his high character and of his distinguished services to the Nation, the State, and the City. The chair was occupied by the Hon. Richard Olney, and there were present prominent clergymen of various religious beliefs, bankers, merchants, lawyers, doctors, and personal friends.

Brief addresses were made by the distinguished chairman and by many prominent members of the representative assemblage, and all the speakers favored the establishment of some form of memorial to be designed in a manner suitable to the wishes of the people and acceptable to the artistic sense of the community.

An Executive Committee was chosen to give effect to the desires of the people as they found expression in the press and in the addresses of the gentlemen who had responded to the call. This committee was empowered by vote to raise the funds needed, to determine the form which the Memorial should take, and to proceed, without further instructions, to do all that the meeting had outlined.

At the head of this body Mr. Jerome Jones was placed. Mr. James J. Storrow was chosen

Treasurer, and Mr. M. P. Curran was made Secretary. With these were associated, by unanimous vote of the meeting, Dr. John G. Blake, Robert M. Burnett, Right Rev. William Byrne, D.D., the Hon. Edwin Upton Curtis, the Hon. Thomas J. Gargan, Lieutenant-Governor Curtis Guild, Jr., Thomas B. Fitzpatrick, Right Rev. William Lawrence, D.D., James M. Prendergast, A. Shuman, General Charles H. Taylor, and Lucius Tuttle.

This Committee entered upon the arduous and delicate task imposed upon it with earnestness and zeal. It issued an appeal to the public for subscriptions. The answer to this was so prompt and generous that within two days there was substantial evidence that the work of the Committee would have the support of the community. The appeal was issued on September 27, 1905, and on September 29 the Treasurer acknowledged through the press the receipt of $11,290. On October 16, or in sixteen working days, there was received $25,674.25, or more money than the Committee asked for.

No collectors or solicitors were employed. Every dollar received by the Treasurer was sent in or brought in; and there were over 600 contributors, the sums ranging from $500 to ten cents. It may be said that the record in this case is probably without parallel. The Committee closed the subscription lists on October 29, and the Treasurer had then in his possession the sum of $26,444.12.

The Committee decided early in its deliberations that the Memorial should be an addition to the artistic treasures of the city, and that it

should assume the form of a gateway to one of the public parks or of a statue in one of the squares. It was decided also that, if possible, a Boston artist should design and execute the work. With this object in mind the Committee issued an invitation to Boston sculptors, architects, and persons of artistic taste to submit suggestions, designs, models, or advice which might aid the Committee in its purpose to get the best and most meritorious plan for the Memorial.

It soon came to be known that four eminent sculptors of Boston had begun to work on the plans and designs, and that all of them had adopted the scheme of a statue as the most fitting. The Boston Society of Architects cheerfully responded to the request of the Committee for advice and counsel. Messrs. J. Randolph Coolidge, Jr., R. S. Peabody, and C. H. Blackall, acting as a committee of that body, rendered voluntary and valuable assistance in the selection of the best design and the most desirable location for the monument.

On February 1, 1907, a contract was signed by the chairman of the Committee, and H. H. Kitson and Theo Alice Ruggles Kitson for these purposes: "The sculptors agree to design, execute, furnish, and erect for the Committee a suitable granite and bronze memorial to the late Patrick A. Collins, Mayor of Boston, substantially in accordance with the model and plans approved by the Committee on October 4, 1905, subject to the approval of said Committee and the Art Commission of the City of Boston."

On November 2, 1908, this Memorial was

unveiled, dedicated, and presented to the City of Boston. An account of the ceremonies and proceedings incident to the closing of the Committee's work of a little over three years will be found in succeeding pages.

On a platform in front of the veiled monument sat Mayor George A. Hibbard, Archbishop William H. O'Connell, and the memorial committee. At 11 o'clock A.M. Mr. Jerome Jones, chairman of that committee, introduced His Grace, the Archbishop, to open the proceedings with prayer. The assembled guests who occupied the seats on the observation stand then heard him deliver impressively the Lord's prayer:—

> *Our Father, who art in heaven; hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. Amen.*

ADDRESS BY MR. JEROME JONES.

Mr. Jerome Jones for the committee said:— We have assembled here to-day to dedicate a memorial to a distinguished citizen of Boston. Little more than three years ago we were startled by the intelligence that Patrick A. Collins, Mayor of Boston, had passed away. The impulse was spontaneous and wide-spread that something more than the usual marks of sorrow should bear witness to our affection for him. At a meeting of those who had known him best a committee was appointed to consider what form a memorial should take, and to provide means for its erection. In less than one month the voluntary offerings of more than five hundred of his friends had amounted to nearly thirty thousand dollars.

The career of the subject of this outburst of popular affection had appealed in no ordinary degree to the interest of his fellow-citizens. A poor immigrant boy, working at manual labor, by dint of industry, faithfulness, alertness, and square dealing, had risen to a high place in his profession, and had won conspicuous honors in the service of the public. These are too well known to need recital here. They have become a part of the cherished history of this community.

His likeness in enduring bronze, soon to be unveiled to your view, with the monument of which it is a part, would fail of its real purpose, were it merely to mark our grief at a personal loss or even to express our sense of Boston's obligation to a distinguished public servant.

This memorial should carry a nobler message than this. It should speak to the generations of Boston of the future, children as they will be of every race and faith, but bound in many cases by the comradeship of poverty and of toil, telling them, as they rise in their long line, that here is a land of opportunity, where industry and faithfulness and honor may win their deserved rewards. This memorial will become in a larger sense a monument to American opportunity, to the chance that is here held out to those who apply themselves earnestly and manfully to life's work and life's duties.

The subject of this memorial learned a trade. He made himself useful first. He then prepared himself by study and effort for usefulness in a wider field. Daniel Webster's allusion to the crowds at the bottom of the ladder and the plenty of room at the top has seldom been more strikingly exemplified than in the career of Patrick A. Collins. While doing his work faithfully at the crowded bottom, he made himself ready to stand securely on the rungs which are higher up.

My personal acquaintance with Mr. Collins covered nearly twoscore years. I enjoyed his companionship. His wit was a peculiar source of delight to all who came in contact with him: it softened the rough places of life, it ironed out the wrinkles of care. Intimacy with him recalled Emerson's lines: "A friend may be reckoned the masterpiece of nature."

The committee are gratified by the presence here to-day of Mrs. Collins and members of her family. Mr. Paul Collins, the only son of the late Mayor, will now unveil the memorial.

SPEECH OF ACCEPTANCE BY MAYOR HIBBARD.

To the formal presentation the mayor replied: This memorial is intended to serve as a lasting tribute to Patrick A. Collins, always regarded as an example of the highest type of our citizenship. A man of the strictest integrity, his public activities throughout his career were actuated by the highest ideals. Thoughtless of self, but ever mindful of the welfare of others, —his character at all times unsullied,—his capabilities and virtues were recognized and appreciated, not only by this country, but by the governments and people of other lands.

I cannot express in any more forcible or direct manner my appreciation of his high and conspicuous Americanism or his lofty patriotism than by quoting this excerpt from one of his notable addresses: "I kneel at the altar of my fathers, and I love the land of my birth, but in American politics I know neither color, race, nor creed. Let me say here and now that there are no Irish voters among us. There are Irish-born citizens, like myself, and there will be many more of us, but the moment the seal of the court was impressed upon our papers we ceased to be foreigners and became Americans. Americans we are, Americans we will remain, and your children, native-born men, and mine, I trust, will live together in amity and peace in this great and free country as Americans. In this lies the safety of our institutions, in this is the guarantee of the Union."

I am deeply gratified that, as mayor of the city of Boston, I have the opportunity to accept this tribute to his memory. The inscription upon it portrays the broadness and liberality of the man, and the municipality is grateful to the donors. It shall be the duty and the pleasure of the citizens to preserve the memorial in perpetuity.

Owing to the inclemency of the weather, the committee decided to hold the further exercises incident to the dedication in the ball-room of the Hotel Somerset, and thither the guests went, on invitation. On a raised platform were seated the living former mayors of the city and all persons having part in the exercises. When all were seated, Chairman Jones introduced the Hon. John D. Long, who delivered the formal address.

ATRICK
ANDREW
COLLINS
1844—1905

EX-GOVERNOR LONG'S ADDRESS.

It is not the discharge of a perfunctory duty, but a labor of love, to take my part in this tribute to Patrick Andrew Collins. With you who knew him well, and to whom he is still a warm, living personality, I delight to join in putting in permanent place in the heart of the city which honored him and which he honored this lifelike counterfeit of his face. With you I vividly recall his generous eloquence, his sparkling and kindly wit, his magnanimous spirit, his embodied integrity of mind and heart.

Some one of our talented representatives of his fellow Irish blood would more eloquently portray his life and character, as Mr. Curran has so admirably written his biography. But I am here because to those in charge it has seemed fitting that the word of this occasion should be spoken by one of that stock which is indebted to him for so handsomely promoting in our social and political life the assimilation with that stock of his own. Erin and Columbia join in this tribute as in yonder statuary group they support him, one on either side.

That word, heartfelt, if meagre, I speak as his friend countryman and lover. And I speak it for the Puritan and Pilgrim as well as for his own and every other nationality whose blood has mingled with theirs and his. And I speak it to you who represent all these interwoven fibres of our present cosmopolitan citizenship.

We are erecting a memorial not to a famous man of past time who has become a historic

figure and only whose historic characteristics have filtered down to us,—a distillation of unmixed virtues rather than a personality of flesh and blood,—but to one who was our recent contemporary and who, active in our chief municipal office, his voice ringing in the very front of the conflicts of the time, his counsel sought, his service invaluable, was cut off in his prime, the touch of his hand still lingering in ours. No need to draw, for your own consciousness at once paints upon your mind's eye, the picture of the man, the tall, easy-swinging figure, the attractive kindly intelligent mobile face, the responsive smile, the swift apt repartee, the cordial manner.

It is this that gives a special charm to the tribute we now pay him. Our city is rich in its statues of its great ones. Among them are statesmen, soldiers, reformers, philanthropists, scholars, some of them undoubtedly superior to him in permanent fame, in conspicuousness of service, and in lasting influence. But at sight of which of them, as we gaze at the likeness, so quickly springs from the heart the smile or tear of responsive comradeship?

It is a good feature in our modern life that the personal memorial is so frequent,—such as that most impressive and beautiful figure of the sheltering angel of death, the handiwork of the foremost of American sculptors, at the grave of the wife of a private citizen; or the published volume of the life of the woman who, as head of a great female college, gave it larger distinction and range, but who also gave to her home, from the heart of which the volume came, the benediction of paradise. It is a peculiar de-

light of this occasion that we blend the personal and public recognition of one who adorned private and public life, and who at once won the confidence of the people he served and the love of the hosts of friends he made.

It seems to me, contrary to the conventional notion, that the dominant chord in the life of Collins is that of good fortune,—fortunate in the stock from which he came, in the island of his birth, in the gifts of nature's bestowal, in his education, and in the circumstances which, under a seemingly frowning providence, hid the smiling faces of good angels who hovered about him and guided his footsteps. To be born an Irishman is to inherit the daring spirit inspired by centuries of resistance to political and religious oppression, by the heroisms of a subject but stubbornly resisting race, and by the traditions which associate every inch of native soil with legend and story of adventure and brave deeds. It is to inherit the contagious ardor that springs from the undaunted uprising out of the bitterness of defeat as well as out of the glory of victory, and from the song of the native poet, the eloquence of the orator, the intense passion of the patriot, and the height of religious and national enthusiasm.

The sorrows of Ireland, the very essence of pathos, yet infused with the vivacity, the quick wit, the shrewdness, and cheery humor of the race, have made it to its children a land of inspiration and eager hope. Was there ever a more impassioned loyalty to mother land? Its statesmen, orators, soldiers, devotees, priests, poets, and writers, more often than otherwise serving and illumining other lands than their own, have

enrolled their names on the upper scrolls of fame. Its natural beauties, from which so many a worthy son has been exiled, have never lost their hold on his memory or his dreams. Who does not know that exquisite description by Macaulay of picturesque Kerry, within fifty miles of which Collins was born,—"the most beautiful tract in the British Isles,—the mountains, the glens, the capes, stretching far into the Atlantic, the crags on which the eagles build, the rivers brawling down rocky passes, the lakes overhung by groves in which the wild deer find covert. On the rare days when the sun shines out in all his glory the landscape has a freshness and a warmth of coloring seldom found in our latitude. The myrtle loves the soil. The arbutus thrives better than even on the sunny shore of Calabria. The turf is of a livelier hue than elsewhere; the hills glow with a richer purple; the varnish of the holly and ivy is more glossy; and berries of a brighter red peep through foliage of a brighter green."

To say, then, of Collins that he had the gifts of his race and of his native isle is to attribute to him some of the most charming and brilliant qualities of human nature. It is to associate him with the romantic legends of the days "when the O'Neils and O'Donnells were independent princes," with the exquisite sentiment and humor of Goldsmith, the luminous eloquence of Burke, the splendid heroism of Sarsfield, the tuneful verse of Moore, the pathos of Emmet, the devotion of Father Mathew—but why count all the sparkling jewels of the diadem! Other lands have as great treasures of glorious names and memories; but with

Ireland, perhaps owing to the very sorrows and afflictions which for so many years either drove her sons into exile or repressed them at home, her inspirations have seemed to intensify themselves into the spirit and culture of her children as have those of no other land. How many examples of this come to our minds!—none more striking than Collins whom we honor to-day. And let me not forget his especially chosen and close confrères whose symposiums with him are already among our local traditions, O'Reilly and Roche and Gargan, the turf above two of whom has for many months been green and above the other has just been watered with our tears.

Of such stuff as this surely must have been the angels that ministered at the birth of Collins; and fitting it was that in his humble native Irish cot in Ballanafauna, ere yet his lips could lisp in numbers, the great orator Daniel O'Connell laid the benediction of his hand upon the boy's head, predicting his rise to fame and dedicating his life to public service. May not at the same time the electric spark of that eloquent tongue have flashed into the boy's soul and charged it full!

In 1848, at four years of age, Collins was an immigrant to this country from Ireland. His father, an Irish tenant farmer under the depression of the Irish landlord system, had died the year before and left his family in poverty. It was the year of the famine which, robbing the Irishman of his potato, robbed him of all he had of his own in this world's goods. The father was a man of strong natural parts, with a scholarly bent that found expression in fugitive

verse. He was of that class of men of more than ordinary natural abilities, industry, thrift, and force, an exodus of whom the famine of that year sent to our shores. In their earnestness, their loyalty to their religious faith, their endurance and toil, their neighborly allegiance to one another, they were not unlike our Puritan ancestors, whose immigration two centuries earlier was also prompted by discontent with conditions in the mother land. Their strongly marked Celtic faces, many of which I recall and have known as types which the sculptor would choose, indicated their natural strength of character, needing only education and opportunity. Deprived at home of ownership in the soil, they here seemed to seek, first of all, each his own house and lot of land. They worked hard wherever work was to be had, but the benefit of their labor was now their own. With careful economy and great thrift they added slowly but surely to the acquisition of property which was at last theirs in their own right. They were proudly self-supporting, and the beggar or the pauper was not among them. So they became an added rock for the security of property, not to be carried away by any craze for the disorganization of society or led astray by the frenzies of the fanatic or irresponsible agitator.

The young Irish-American of this generation, full-fledged for all the flights of American politics, profession, and business, will do well if he maintains the standard of the honest thrift and faithful service of the immigrants of 1847. Above all their domestic and family relations are worthy of all praise. These were strengthened by

their religious obligations and their unswerving allegiance to their Church. Few men have less sympathy than I have with the claims of ecclesiastical infallibility and domination. I have the Puritan's disrelish for religious forms and ceremonies and the radical's instinctive refusal of the miraculous and supernatural. But I acknowledge with grateful and swift appreciation the tremendous influence of the Catholic Church for good in our social life. How it ignores all distinctions among its worshippers and puts them all on the level of a common equality before the altar of their faith! What was a king's crown to Becket? How it holds its people in loyalty to its standards! Nothing is more striking than its fruit in the purity and devotion of the family circle. For generations the Catholic woman and wife in our country has been an example of fidelity, whether in the service of others or in the thrifty and industrious administration of her own household. Her daughters in turn she has trained in good morals and useful labor. Indeed, she deserves the crown of womanly purity and service.

Such were the men and women from whom Collins came. Of that stamp was his widowed mother, who, a pilgrim on "the bleak New England shore," sought for her little ones the blessings of a land of freedom, and for their sake dared and bore all the privations and hardships of her scanty lot. Hers were the true mother's sacrifice and lifelong devotion. And did she not have her proud reward? And his were the true son's love and appreciation to the last.

If I have dwelt at length on these things,

Collins would have had me do so rather than solely on him. Then, too, no man is of himself alone. Like an individual piece in the cut-up picture puzzles of the day, he counts only by virtue of his surroundings. He is moulded into shape by antecedent influence and the environment of other lives.

At once upon his arrival here began the identification of Collins with our institutional life, his entrance into every avenue of our free opportunities and his training as an American citizen. Settled in Chelsea, he went to the public schools. There the very roughing of his Yankee schoolmates, who persecuted him with the heartlessness of children and the racial and religious prejudices of that time,—happily not of this,—only developed the self-sustaining qualities of the boy and, to his honor be it said, left no sting to fester in his heart. Eager to be of helpful service toward the family support, he was at work in a fish and oyster shop at eleven. Faithful to his church duties, he was an altar-boy and taught in Sunday-school. He next soared to the giddy height of office and errand boy in the law office in Boston of Robert Morris, the colored lawyer, whose home was in Chelsea and who had probably been attracted by that bright, eager, intelligent young face. He now caught the contagious atmosphere of the courts as he saw the lawyers sitting within the sacred bar, over the rail of which one can fancy him gazing, listening to its wordy contests, and no doubt dreaming, half hopelessly, of sharing some day in its opportunities.

At thirteen his mother went to Ohio, where for two years he was at hard manual labor,

working in fields and coal mines, driving a market wagon and running an engine and other machinery. Fancy what spirit meantime burned within the boy's heart, what dreams were there! At the end of the two years, in 1859, the family came back to Boston. And, now a full adult, he found more permanent employment as an apprentice in a leading upholstery shop, of which four years later, at nineteen, he became foreman. He lived in South Boston, walking to and fro. He was a charter member of the upholsterers' union. Already his interests were expanding, putting out their roots and feelers into all that environed him. The opportunities of his scanty leisure, sometimes robbed from sleep, were neither wasted nor neglected. He attended evening schools or spent his evenings in the public library. His reading there was of a wide range, ancient and modern history, the standard novels, the best essayists and poets,— all the best of these. He read as wisely and as well as if directed by a college instructor, enriching his mind with literary treasures from which in after-life he eloquently drew, and which, gathered in his ampler days into a generous library of his own, were his oft-sought and unfailing refreshment and delight.

Meanwhile he was, of course, full of ardor in the cause, which was then of acute interest, of his native land. He was in intense sympathy with its advocates in America and Ireland. He joined its organizations, but his good sense led him to insist on keeping the Irish issue out of American politics. He made public addresses and wrote articles for publication, and was fast establishing a local reputation for clear, cogent

reasoning and expression and for a style direct, eloquent, and as free from grandiloquence or floridity as if, again, he had been under college instruction. Already it was evident that his true vocation was in the line of a profession opening into the channels of public service. At twenty-three he was an educated man. The mechanic's toil, the evening school, the curriculum of the public library, the immediate close touch with the people, and their quick responsive recognition of this bright, eager spirit who was of them and who shared their sympathies,—all these assured his rise as no college degree could have done. Education is the same, whatever the channel through which it comes; and it came to him free and full through the institutions and the atmosphere of the city which he lived to repay and to honor. Landing on our shores a child, all the best opportunities of American life had opened at once wide before him; and he seized them. What a lesson to all young men in humble circumstances! What seems so exceptional in the pathway of his career is really only the ordinary and natural pathway that is open to any who will walk in it,—not always to the same goal, but always to equal rewards of self-respect and faithful service. The exceptional thing in him is that he was wise enough to choose the right path. I am right in saying that his was from the first a fortunate career, but it was so because, like Lincoln, he improved the means to make it so.

He now in 1867, at twenty-three, began the study of the law and at the same time began his public political career. What more natural

than that this gifted young man, attending a caucus of the Democratic party, better educated than most men, his self-earned culture already recognized among his associates, should be asked to address the meeting! What more natural than that, under the impression made by him, he should on the spot be chosen a delegate to the State Convention of the party and a few months later elected a representative to the General Court! In that capacity he served two years, and then served the next two years in the Senate, "the youngest man," says Mr. Curran, "that ever donned the senatorial toga in Massachusetts." Point me in all the annals of the Commonwealth to a more fortunate start for a young man in public life. To what college graduate has come so speedy an opening?

Of course, his foot was now on the ladder, not by any means on the lowest round, and his rise was assured. His legislative record had been one of liberal and efficient service, especially in the removal of sectarian limitations upon civil rights and in the development of the commercial interests of the harbor of Boston. And his reputation as a clear, eloquent, forcible speaker was established.

At the end of his senatorial term in 1871, at twenty-seven years of age, he opened his law office. His capital in his new vocation was no heritage of wealth, no potent array of corporate or social influences,—as indeed these have rarely been the capital of the successful lawyer,—but an alert, cultured mind, an unblemished reputation for personal worth, the prestige of honorable political service, the confidence of the plain people who knew him, the courage of his

convictions, and, above all, a consciousness of that combination of talent with common sense and honesty which is the best working genius.

Practice soon came, and from small beginnings rose to large and remunerative returns. Had he devoted himself to it exclusively, and not been drawn from it by the demands of a more public career, he would have had not only the living lawyer's eminence, but also, alas! the dead lawyer's oblivion. The law is a jealous mistress, and his political service compelled him to be away long and often from her side. In view of this it is the more striking that he should have attained and held a place at the bar among those of the legal profession whose names are quickest recognized when the roll of honor is called.

Not often at a meeting of the bar in commemoration of its dead members have more earnest and appreciative tributes been heard than at that for him. He practised in all our courts. He was especially apt and strong before juries. He was always in demand at hearings before legislative committees. And need I say that he was beloved by his fellow-lawyers? They cannot speak of him without recalling his winning and lovable personality.

But his chief fame is in his more public career. Almost continually an executive officer and leader in the councils and organizations of the Democratic party, member of each branch of the General Court of Massachusetts, member of Congress, president of the Democratic National Convention at St. Louis in 1888, consul-general to London, mayor of Boston at which post he died, and a familiar figure on the plat-

form in political campaigns and at banquets, public meetings, and receptions to distinguished guests and indeed on all civic and institutional occasions, he became the most prominent man of his race in New England, if not indeed in the United States. Before he was thirty, he was chairman of the Democratic City Committee of Boston. He was an efficient speaker on the stump in 1874 in the election of Governor Gaston, who put him on the gubernatorial military staff as Judge Advocate General with the title of General. It was a title, however, which, with no taste for sounding military titles in piping times of peace, he never relished. In the presidential campaign of 1876 he was an earnest advocate of Tilden, not only at home, but in the Middle and Western States, winning increased reputation for convincing eloquence.

The defeat of his candidate gave him a respite from political service, which he improved by a visit to Ireland, whose cause was always dear to him. Parnell, then its leader, had recently been in America, where the famous Land League had been formed and Collins made its first president. For months, speaking in all our large cities, he had devoted himself to its advancement and to the work of raising hundreds of thousands of dollars to be sent to Ireland. As might have been expected, therefore, on his arrival there his welcome was heartily enthusiastic, distinguished by the gift of the freedom of the city of Dublin and a municipal banquet. But his devotion to that cause never blinded him to fair play. When Cavendish and Burke were foully assassinated in the public park in Dublin, Collins, then in Boston, presided at a

meeting in Faneuil Hall, and denounced in no uncertain terms "the miscreants," as he called them, who had brought discredit on the cause he held dear.

He was a member of Congress from the Boston district for three terms, from 1883 to 1889. His election, like all his elections to public office before and afterwards, came to him, not at his own solicitation or seeking, but at the demand of party constituencies, which, because of their recognition of his merit, fitness, and ability, solicited and sought him as their best and strongest man. There could perhaps be no better test than this of his superiority and of the qualities which to-day make us single him out for an honor which is paid only to the greater lights. I have an impression that he was ambitious for the culture of a full life rather than for place; that the former he sought through books, companionships, oratory; that the latter came to him without his seeking, and that its exactions and routine, while faithfully met, were not altogether to his taste.

While in Congress, he served on the Judiciary Committee, its legal atmosphere being especially agreeable to him. He was largely interested in all questions that affected the commercial interests of Boston. He was charged with the passage through the House of the bankruptcy bill, which he was one of the foremost in preparing. He spoke rarely on the floor, but always with effect. He took no part in the running of partisan parliamentary machinery. He was, as with his genial and companionable habit he could not help being,

popular with both sides, and was held in high esteem. It was during this service that he so emphatically rebuked the overzealous or underhonest representative of certain interests who offered him a large sum of money because, unconscious of them and actuated only by his own convictions, he had effectively advocated some bill by which they benefited. He could not be paid more than he could be purchased in the line of his duty. Creditable as was his Congressional career, it had little charm for him. He declined a fourth election, and moved out of his constituent district to avoid it.

And yet, though returning to legal practice from which came his support, he could not help being for the remainder of his life a public man. The demand upon him was irresistible. He continued to be, as he had been, in the van of his party year after year. In the presidential campaign of 1884 there was no more effective speaker on the Democratic stump than he. Mr. Blaine's hold on what was called the Irish vote was strong. Some influential leaders and newspapers of that complexion were earnestly for him. It is not too much to say that Collins by a masterly and most effective speech at Albany, directed to that element, turned the tide, and turned it so far that the election of his candidate, Mr. Cleveland, was thereby assured. If any one man elected Cleveland, it was Collins. From that time on he was in demand in all the doubtful States.

If he was not given a seat in Cleveland's cabinet as the representative of New England, it was not because he had not earned that distinction, but probably because of some political

exigency in the political situation; for President Cleveland fully appreciated his deserts and capabilities, and the relations between them were always those of cordial mutual esteem and regard. In evidence of this Cleveland, after his second election in 1892, gave one of the most lucrative and sought-for positions in his gift to Collins, appointing him consul-general at London. Something of poetic interest attaches itself to the thought of this poor peasant boy, driven from his native isle by governmental oppression, now in his prime returning to it a distinguished citizen of the United States and its honored consular representative at the great capital of the British Empire under whose allegiance he was born. It is to the honor of that empire that its government gave him cordial reception, with no reservation because of his lifelong and conspicuous association with the elements that had so persistently sought from England more generous recognition of Irish rights. For four years he was at this post, the recipient of manifold courtesies and commanding in the discharge of his duties the approval of his countrymen at home and abroad and of the authorities to whom he was accredited.

It was a natural sequence that, after his return, he should be the choice of his party for Mayor of Boston. Defeated in 1899, he was elected to that biennial office in 1901 and again in 1903, holding it at the time of his death. He entered upon its duties with high purpose, with an earnest zeal for the honor and credit of the city, and with an especial ambition to save it from those inroads of extravagance and plunder,

those raids upon the public treasury, and those attempts to secure selfish privilege and franchise, which are the bane of American municipalities and the cure of which is the crying problem of the day. Reform in these lines is slow and hard, but in his honesty and integrity there was everywhere confidence, and these were the bulwarks he opposed to every flagrant or insidious foe to the good name or material interest of the city.

But they were not a bulwark against the inroads of a life of incessant wear and tear in public service upon his physical constitution. He had sought a brief period of recuperation at Hot Springs, Virginia. There suddenly the angel of death stood at his side bringing rest, and he died September 14, 1905. The sorrow was universal. A hundred thousand people thronged the streets of Boston at his funeral. From all parts of the country and from the island of his birth came messages of appreciation. The press, without distinction of party, paid him warm tributes. The Suffolk bar met in his honor. Boston had a memorial service. A fund, contributed by hundreds of citizens, representing all parties, races, professions, and business interests, was raised to erect this permanent memorial which we unveil to-day.

I have detailed, in brief and lacking outline, the record of his public service. But that record, even were it complete, would be only a skeleton, —the dry bones. It is the heart within, it is the man himself, the warm blood coursing in his veins, wit sparkling in his eye, his lips speaking, —it is these that I would recall now as when I began. What a copious nature it was! He was a magnanimous man. Malice was not in

him. He fought hard, but he fought fair. He did not strike below the belt. We who differed from him knew him for a dangerous but always an honorable foe. His mind was large and liberal. His outlook was broad and generous. Devoted to the religious faith of his fathers, fervently devoted to the cause of Erin, he was outspoken in his demand that neither should stand in the way of the political duties and obligations of American citizenship.

A son of toil, his youth spent in manual work, early a charter member of a labor organization, he yet recognized the rights of both capital and labor. In the conflicts between them which seem to grow more acute the more prosperous each becomes, how invaluable would be now and in the near years to come his counsel and his influence! As a leader in one of our great political parties, how invaluable in keeping its rudder true! As a citizen, how invaluable in the tremendous problem of preserving the balance between progress and conservatism! With the immense inflow of elements from abroad which have not been trained in our conventional and old-time political and social system, we look to his race, with its instinctive drift into politics, its loyalty to ecclesiastical authority, its thrift and material holdings, and its consequent direct interest in the security and stability of property and social order, as now, and hereafter to be still more, one of our great conservative forces. Would he were still living to embody and enforce its influence!

As head of a family, loyal son, devoted husband and father, where is there a sweeter picture or a better example of domestic life? What

wonder that whether in Washington or London, his heart turned to the Massachusetts fireside, and that no official honor, no triumph of the forum, no plaudit of delighted audiences, supplanted the charm of home, the voices of wife and children, the serene companionship of his books!

It was indeed a copious, a sweet, genial nature. The sunshine ran through it. Some of his bright sayings are as familiar among us as household words. Rising sometimes to the height of the orator, always through his speech played the lambent glow of kindly humor. It was a pleasure to meet him, to clasp hands with him, to exchange with him the passing word. And, after all, in this brotherly intercourse of ours, well as we think we know one another, how much more than these fleeting intercommunications do we get?

But this was not all. Underneath were the structural honesty and integrity of the man. He was worthy of the trusts reposed in him. No evil was in his thought. He was an honor to his native Ireland, the welfare of which was close to his heart. He was a loyal citizen and servant of our Commonwealth which he made his home, and of the nation which he made his own. He is an example to every aspiring young man, whatever his race or circumstances, of the value and fruit of an honest and true and therefore of a happy life.

"Far may we search before we find
A heart so manly and so kind."

Green as the Emerald Isle forever be the turf of Massachusetts above him!

H 73 78 544 1

FEB 78
N MANCHESTER,
INDIANA

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 014 014 367 4